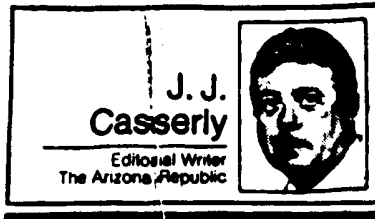


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CIA Is Renewing Old Links With Academic Community



Cambridge, Mass.

The Central Intelligence Agency is not coming in out of the cold, but it is stepping out of the closet.

The agency is now renewing old, and establishing new links with the nation's academic community.

The relationship has been in a deep freeze for much of the past 20 years as a result of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal.

The case of Soviet double-defector Vitaly Yurchenko — the top KGB spy who came in from the cold only to return to his closet in Moscow — has again raised major questions about the professional smarts of the CIA.

Other developments — from Iran to the Beirut bombing of U.S. Marines and the handling of other incidents — are causing new challenges of the agency's general competency.

Amid this background, academia and the agency have begun to rebuild bridges to one another. About 150 professors at various colleges are now part-time consultants to the CIA. But the agency needs more help, and it is stepping up recruiting of faculty and students.

I have a ringside seat here at Harvard where faculty, students

and the agency are strengthening a tenuous relationship. It is shaky because, although some Harvard scholars work for the CIA, other faculty and students regularly assail the agency.

In the latest flap, 35 students picketed outside the Kennedy School of Government to protest CIA recruiters who were interviewing job candidates inside.

Six faculty members at Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies called on the university to institute a ban on all CIA research funding here.

They and others also protested that center Director Nadav Safran accepted about \$150,000 from the CIA to sponsor a two-day conference on Islamic fundamentalism and write a book about Saudi

Arabia.

Yet, no one in the country needs to know more about these subjects than the CIA.

Campus critics are protesting that the CIA is in a dirty business, and that university affiliation with the agency compromises academic integrity.

They specifically argue that secret work for the CIA on campuses is highly questionable, and academics abridge their integrity and freedom by accepting agency funding.

It does not take a master's degree in public policy from Harvard to know that the CIA is not the Boy Scouts of America. And by definition, much of the agency's work is secret. Why spend money on research and then publish the

results for the Kremlin or international terrorist organizations to use?

The sources of all outside funding should be disclosed to top officials for the protection of each university. Some research is secret, of course, but its general thrust should be known to academic authorities.

The CIA cannot be allowed to censor any work and, undoubtedly, would not wish to do so in seeking the truth. It cannot edit any public work because that would corrupt the scholars' reputations.

Long ago, critics should have differentiated between the analytical and operational arms of the agency. Spies are operational. The guys in the green eyeshades between the ivy-covered walls are

trying to relate multifaceted information. There is a world of difference.

The work of the CIA on campuses is essentially the analysis of economic, social and political developments in various parts of the globe. The agency would be derelict in a legitimate function of government if it did not.

Frankly, with the recent CIA track record, I sleep better knowing it is at Harvard and elsewhere. The country needs better minds to enlighten us since most Americans are really out in the cold.

(J.J. Casserly is on leave as a Fellow at Harvard University. He is at the Kennedy School of Government's Institute of Politics.)